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OLD
WITCH
OF THE
HILL

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CHELSEA JUNIORS
A division of Chelsea House Publishers
New York • Philadelphia

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Printed and bound in the United States of America.
ISBN 0-7910-1477-0

The Old Witch and the Dragon

The old farmer
was plowing his field.
The sun was shining.
The birds were singing.

The farmer's wife
was in the kitchen
baking some bread.
The dog was sleeping.
The cat was purring.

"I smell something good,"
said the farmer.
"I think Ma is baking bread.
It must be lunch time."

The farmer put his horse
in the meadow.
"Say, Ma," he called.
"Come to the door.
See that big crow up there."
Ma came out to look.
"That sure is a big crow, Pa.
It's the biggest crow
I ever saw."
The big crow came closer
and closer.
It got bigger and bigger.

"Land sakes, Pa," said Ma.
"That's not a crow.
It looks like—"
"A DRAGON!" yelled Pa.
"Run, Ma! It's a dragon!"

It WAS a dragon!
His great wings flapped
like 100 winds blowing.
His tail was a mile long.
Fire came out of his mouth.
Smoke puffed out of his nose.

At that very moment
the Old Witch of the Hill
was out watering her garden.
"What's that big noise?"
she said.

Then she looked up.
"Great hopping toads!"
she cried.
"It's the Dragon
of Thunder Mountain!"

The Dragon of Thunder Mountain
flew over the farmer's house.
The old witch saw him come down
in the meadow.
His fire burned up
the farmer's hay.
His terrible jaws pulled up
the farmer's apple tree.

The farmer and his wife
peeked out of their windows.
They shivered and shook.

The witch hopped on her broom
and flew down the hill
to the valley.
"I know that old dragon,"
she said.
"He comes off his mountain
every 100 years."

The witch saw the dragon
chew up the farmer's hen house.
His terrible tail knocked over
the farmer's silo.
"He better not come to my hill,"
said the witch.

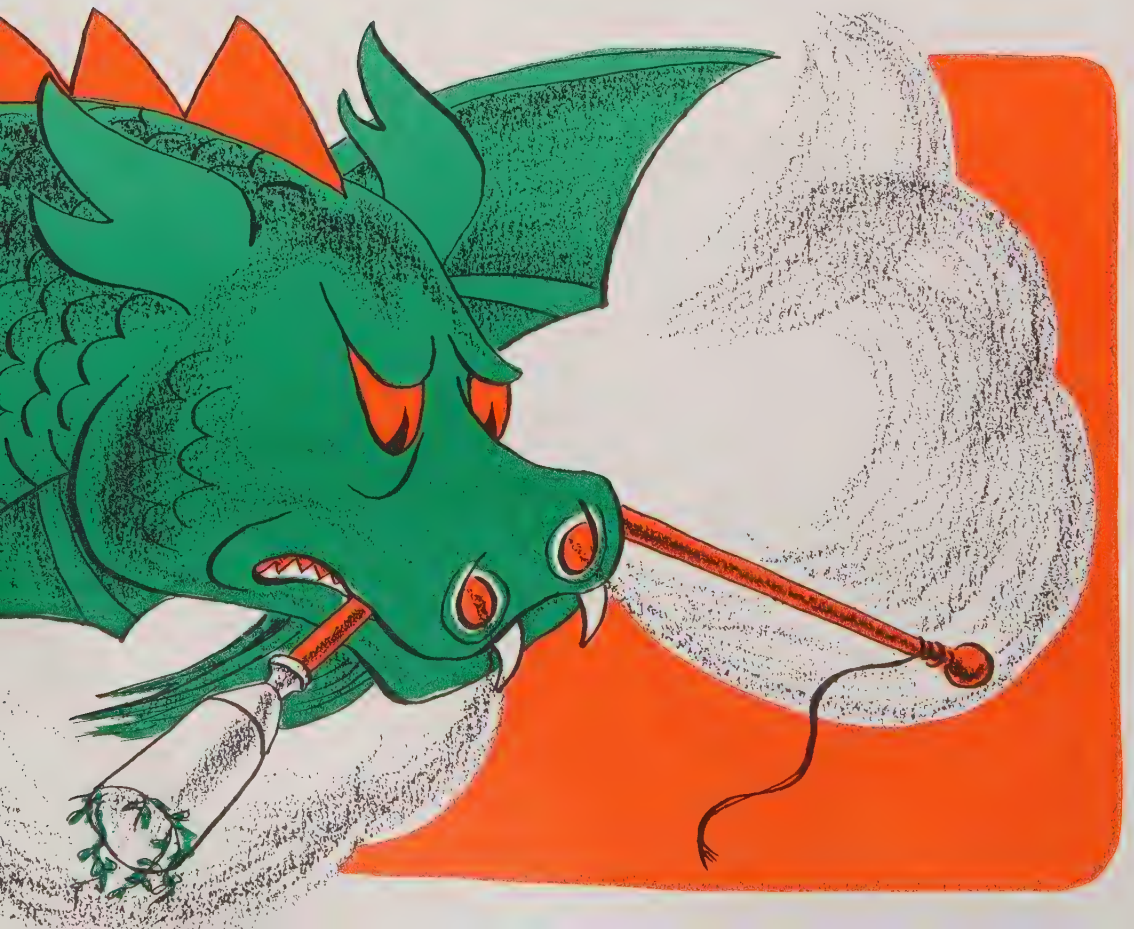
Over in the village
the fire siren was blowing.
The mayor had seen the dragon.
He was jumping up and down
and yelling, "EMERGENCY!"

"Get out the fire engine,"
yelled the mayor.
"Get the cannon ready.
A dragon is coming!"

The dragon came flying
over the village.
His great wings
made such a big wind
it blew all of the wash
off the lines!

"Fire the cannon!"
yelled the mayor.
The men fired the cannon.
BOOM!
But the dragon swallowed
all of the cannonballs!

The dragon came down
in front of town hall.
Crunch, crunch.
He ate up the flagpole!



The mothers called the children
and ran down into the cellars.
Even the dogs hid
in their doghouses.

The old witch was angry.
She flew back to her cave.
"I don't want any dragons
coming around here,"
she said.
She began to make her fire.
"I will make
my most magic brew,"
said the witch.
"I'll fix that dragon."

WORMS
FRIED BUGS
ROTTEN EG
SWAMP WATER

The witch stirred the brew
in her big, black pot.
"I have to make
some extramagic brew
to get rid of that dragon,"
said the witch.
"I will go out
to the other side of the hill
and pick some choke-cherries."
The witch took her basket
and went out of her cave.
But what did she see?
There was the dragon!
He was chewing up the oak tree
where the old witch's owl
had been taking his nap.

"You nasty dragon!"
cried the witch.
"How dare you eat my oak tree!
Get out of here!"

But the dragon blew fire
right at the old witch.
He chased her
back into her cave.

Then he ate up
her biggest pumpkins
and a whole row
of her poison toadstools.

And then that dragon
went to the top
of the witch's hill.
He lay down to rest.

When the witch tried to go out
to get her choke-cherries,
the dragon blew hot fire
right at her door.

"Ha!" said the witch.
"No dragon
is as smart as a witch!"
And that was true.
For the dragon didn't know
that a witch would never,
never have a cave
with just one door.

In the back
of the old witch's cave
was a long, long tunnel.
It went all the way
through the hill
and out the other side!

The dragon watched
the front door.
The old witch went out
the back door.
She got lots of choke-cherries
on the other side of the hill.

The witch went back
to her cave.
She cooked her brew.
She chanted:

Dragon, dragon,
smoke and roar.
But don't come near
a witch's door.

Every once in a while
the witch peeked out
of her cave.
All night long,
the terrible dragon lay
on the top of her hill.

Nobody could sleep a wink.
The people in the village
watched the hill
where the dragon lay.
When would he come down again?

As soon as the sun came up,
the old witch was ready.
She went to the door.
She yelled out,
"Get off my hill,
you big puffer!"

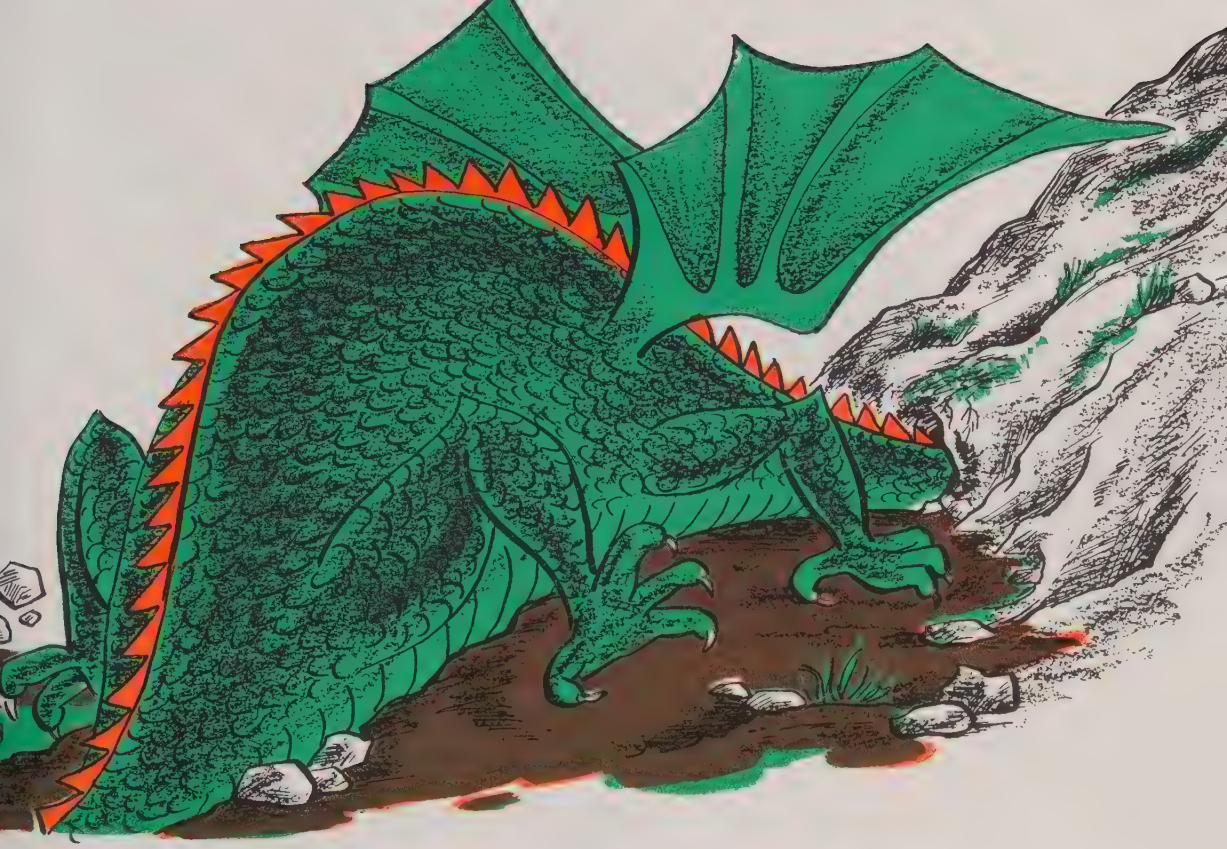
Then she put up a sign
by her door,

DRAGONS KEEP OUT

The dragon let out a big roar.
A little witch
couldn't tell a big dragon
what to do!
He came down the hill,
puffing and roaring.
He stuck his head
right into the witch's cave!

But the smart old witch
had gone down the tunnel
and out the back door
with her jug of magic brew.

The witch flew around the hill.
There was the dragon!
His great head was stuck
in her little doorway.
She could hear him roaring
inside her cave.



"Ah ha!" said the witch.
"I have you where I want you!"
She poured her magic brew
all over the dragon's long tail.
She poured it on
his great flapping wings.

The dragon pulled his head
out of the doorway.
He looked at his tail.
It was as short as
a pussy cat's tail.
He looked at his wings.
They were as little as
a fly's wings.

The Dragon of Thunder Mountain
went creeping away
back to his mountain.

"Hurray!" everyone said.
"The dragon is gone!"
The old farmer made
a new hen house.
The farmer's wife planted
a new apple tree.

The people of the village
put up a new flagpole.
They made a new flag.
It said,

THANK YOU
OLD WITCH

The happy old witch
went back to her cave
to take a long nap.
"Tee-hee-hee!" she said.
"It will take 100 years
for that old dragon
to grow a new tail
a mile long."

OLD
WITCH
OF THE
HILL

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P9-BVI-037

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